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## **Mission CLEMENCEAU 2025: France's Carrier Strike Group in Singapore Amid Wider Indo-Pacific Deployment**

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### **SYNOPSIS**

*As a concrete illustration of France's Indo-Pacific strategy, the CSG will be deployed for more than 150 days, highlighting France's ability to project autonomous air-sea power thousands of miles from its metropolitan coast. While the French CSG had numerous interactions with partnering countries, the five-day port call in Singapore from 4 to 10 March 2025 underscores the city-state's growing importance for both France and Europe in the region.*

### **COMMENTARY**

The name "Clemenceau" is well known to many Singaporeans and, to some extent, reflects the long-standing relationship between France and Singapore.

In 1920, former French prime minister and national war hero Georges Clemenceau embarked on a journey to Asia and [made a stop in Singapore](#). Welcomed as a head of state, the Singaporean authorities honoured the leader by inaugurating "Clemenceau Avenue" in his presence. Twenty years later, in 1940, the "[Clemenceau Bridge](#)" was constructed across the Singapore River. In 2025, the name "Clemenceau" once again resonated in Singapore when the French CSG made a port call there from 4 to 10 March 2025 as part of a wider deployment in the Indo-Pacific under "Mission CLEMENCEAU 2025".



*Amid growing geopolitical tensions, the deployment of the CSG in the Indo-Pacific underscores France's strong commitment to its ambitions in the region. Image source: [Flickr](#).*

## **Indo-Pacific Strategic Signalling**

The CSG refers to all the naval and air units operating as one task force around the aircraft carrier *Charles de Gaulle* and its embarked air group, which includes 22 Rafale Marine jetfighters, two E-2C Hawkeye AEW aircrafts, and three helicopters. The CSG also comprises an escort of destroyers specialised in anti-submarine warfare and anti-air warfare, a nuclear-powered attack submarine, a supply ship, and two ATL2 maritime patrol aircrafts. The CSG's capabilities are multidimensional and multidomain, encompassing sea, underwater, air, land, extra-atmospheric, and cyber realms, as well as the electromagnetic and informational spectrums. This mission demonstrates France's ability to project power over long distances and for extended periods.

While the aircraft carrier has been in active service since 2001, the Mission CLEMENCEAU 2025 is exceptional in its scope and itinerary, steaming for 150 days from the Mediterranean to the Western Pacific — a region where no French CSG has navigated since [the 1960s](#).

As the last European Union's resident power with sovereign territories in the Indo-Pacific, [France](#) is intrinsically concerned and linked to the regional geopolitical challenges. Amid growing fait accompli strategies and access denial capabilities in the region, French president Emmanuel Macron has repeatedly sought to develop a [specific path](#), emphasising France's leading role in defending freedom of navigation and upholding international maritime law while promoting a multilateral approach and rejecting any escalations. In this regard, Mission Clemenceau 2025 is a concrete illustration of the French Indo-Pacific strategy and is part of a long-term military and diplomatic presence in the region.

## **The CSG, a Cooperation Aggregator**

The CSG is an air base equipped with onboard maintenance, fuel, and ammunition. Operating in international waters, it is unconstrained by any agreements with a host country and can be immediately deployed. With incomparable and unmatched maritime projection capabilities, the area covered by its sensors, network, and aircrafts spans a vast territory.

Despite occasional criticism for its [high costs](#), inherent limitations without a [sister ship](#), the challenges posed by Anti-Access/Area Denial (A2/AD) strategies, the increasing effectiveness of long-range missiles, and potential vulnerabilities in [a high-intensity warfare context](#), the aircraft carrier remains a key political instrument of influence, supporting France's ambitions as a global power. Beyond the operational component, the mission also has a diplomatic dimension — “40,000 tonnes of diplomacy”, [Kissinger](#) might have said — and, to a great extent, France's “[finest ambassador](#)” in the region, showcasing French technological excellence and expertise.

At the operational level, the CSG is a maritime [cooperation aggregator](#), fostering interoperability. In the last 10 years, around 30 foreign ships have integrated the French CSG. Mission CLEMENCEAU was no exception, after operations in the Mediterranean Sea and a tense transit through the Red Sea, the deployment strengthened collaborations with key partners such as [India](#), Australia, Japan, ASEAN countries — notably Singapore, Indonesia, the Philippines, Vietnam, and Malaysia — and finally, the [United States](#).

### **France and Singapore: Key Partners in the Indo-Pacific and Beyond**

As a major stopover in the deployment, the [port call](#) of the CSG in Singapore from 4 to 10 March 2025 is highly symbolic of the growing relationship between France and the city-state. The two countries share compatible strategic visions in the Indo-Pacific region, with the “[strategic autonomy](#)” advocated by President Macron echoing the position of “[upholding principles](#)” or “[multi-alignment](#)” championed by some key opinion leaders in Singapore. Illustrating this strategic affiliation, defence collaborations are developing at a rapid pace, with recent mutual deployments like the [PEGASE](#) air mission and concrete operational collaborations, such as when two members of the Singapore Armed Forces medical personnel served aboard a [French ship](#) to care for civilian victims in Gaza in January 2024. For Mission CLEMENCEAU 2025, Singapore's participation in the multinational exercise [LA PEROUSE 25](#) with its patrol boat RSN *Independence* for a visit exercise (VISITEX) focusing on maritime security alongside the French CSG's air defence destroyer in the Malacca Strait, demonstrates enhanced interoperability between the two armed forces. Amidst increasing defence cooperation, Singapore has become France's first partner worldwide in the domain of [military AI](#).

Beyond this growing military cooperation, France and Singapore maintain a rich bilateral relationship in various domains such as the economy, with 1,000 French companies operating in Singapore, research and development, and cultural exchanges. Renowned French institutions like INSEAD, ESSEC, EDHEC, and CNRS are established in the city-state. On the Singaporean side, the visit of its new [prime minister Lawrence Wong to Paris](#) in 2024 officialised the inauguration of a Temasek office in France and the preparation of a comprehensive strategic partnership (CSP), which is expected to be signed in 2025. Marking the 60th anniversary of the establishment of bilateral relations, 2025 is set to be a very dynamic year in the bilateral relationship as President Macron is scheduled to be the guest of honour at the next [Shangri-La Dialogue](#) to deliver the keynote address. As the first European country to open the Shangri-La Dialogue, the French president will undoubtedly build on the recent CSG deployment to articulate France's perspective on the Indo-Pacific's

pressing security challenges and underline the key role of France as a resident nation in the Indo-Pacific and a trusted partner of Singapore.

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